

CityCollegeNews

A newsletter for staff, faculty and alumni of George Brown College

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World Mental Health Day wrap up: immigrants and mental health

By Grace Cherian

How do we perceive immigrants from other cultures? Can we facilitate their mental health?

Three speakers brought different perspectives on immigrants to the 7th Annual World Mental Health Day forum hosted by Redirection Through Education, For You, and the Assistant Cook Extended Training program of George Brown College on Wednesday, October 26.

Dr. Jasmine Zine, a sociology professor at Wilfred Laurier University, related a story of a chaplain who worked with the Muslim community. The chaplain noticed an immigrant repeatedly washing his hands and concluded that the man suffered from obsessive-compulsive disorder. The Muslim immigrant, however, was only performing a cleansing ritual before prayers.

Toronto psychiatrist, Dr. Morton Beiser, recounted how a counsellor tried to help a Cambodian immigrant find work. The counsellor

could not understand the man's reluctance to work as a landscape gardener. A little probing revealed that he had spent time in a Cambodian prison where the guards shot at prisoners in the open fields for random target practice. This immigrant only felt safe working indoors.

Chioma fled to Canada from the Biafran war. She settled in Nova Scotia with her father, stepmother, and extended family. An uncle began molesting her while she was a young girl. Resettlement stress and memories of being sexually abused eventually caused Chioma to spiral into depression.

Dr. Zine spoke about the need to adopt an anti-oppression and anti-racist framework when working with immigrants.

Culture, she said, is comprised of a broad set of ideas, which is learned and shared by a group. Politically and socially constructed, culture influences our identities, beliefs, and

practices. For instance, how we eat lunch or organize our space is a function of our culture.

Culture is also not static; it is fluid and dynamic. As a Canadian citizen, Dr. Zine never had a problem entering the U.S. But it was only after the Sept. 11 bombings that she realized how fragile her Muslim identity was. Now she faces routine questioning at the Canada-U.S. border.

Dr. Beiser told the audience that two common notions exist about immigrants and mental health. The first claims that immigrants are mentally ill; the second argues that they become ill after arriving in Canada.

A ten-year study that Dr. Beiser conducted with 1,300 South-East Asian 'Boat People' (refugees from South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) revealed that the longer immigrants stayed in Canada, the better their mental health became. According to Dr. Beiser, this

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Casa Loma Library Learning Commons officially opened!



Erma and Jamie from the Casa Loma Daycare Centre help Anne cut the ribbon.

On October 31 the Casa Loma Library Learning Commons was officially opened by Anne Sado marking the second and most significant milestone in the three-phased development plan. This event marked the joining of the LRC and Open Access Lab into one fully integrated service, providing students and faculty with a higher quality of service and support in a state-of-the-art facility.

Designed by the architectural firm of Rounthwaite, Dick and Hadley, the Library Learning Commons now offers an appealing, open, and comfortable environment that delivers an enlarged computing network, more student seating, additional work space for staff and growth space for an enlarged book collection to support our degree-level programming and new post-graduate programs.

Investments in educational resources provide our students and faculty with broad access to electronic resources, technology and expertise that provide both access and guidance.

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND CREATIVE ARTS

The Faculty of Business and Creative Arts (BCA) is one of George Brown College's largest academic divisions. Full-time programs offered in BCA are delivered across both the St. James and Casa Loma campuses. BCA has three administrative offices:

- BCA St. James – 200 King St. E. (SJA) Room 313, 3rd floor
- Centre for Financial Services – 290 Adelaide St. E. (SJC) main floor
- BCA Casa Loma – 160 Kendal Ave. Room C442 (Casa Loma "C" building)

As the name implies, the programs offered by BCA align with either Business or Creative Arts. It is a unique combination, and the support staff, faculty and administrators who contribute to BCA operate in a fast-paced, business-like and highly innovative/creative environment.

The programs offered in BCA provide students with practical, useful curriculums that are developed in response to industry needs and are designed to prepare students for the realities of the working world. Of particular note is the fact that 52%* of GBC's international students are registered in programs offered in BCA.

A number of exciting and challenging initiatives have been embraced by BCA in recent years:

- 2003: Launch of the Bachelor of Applied Business – Financial Services, with wireless notebook computing introduced in the second year of the program
- 2004: Massive Change Exhibition created by the Institute without Boundaries – a partnership between the School of Design and Bruce Mau Design
- 2005: Centre for Performing Arts Joint Venture with Soulpepper Theatre Company to launch the Young Centre for the Performing Arts.

The Faculty of Business and Creative Arts continues its path of dynamic change and growth – in 2006-2007 the new programs set to be launched are:

B409

Post-graduate 1-year certificate – Strategic Relationship Marketing (with mandatory Co-op Work Term)

B149/159

3-year undergraduate diploma – Business Administration – Financial Management (with optional Co-op Work Term)

G402

Post-graduate 1-year certificate – Advanced Digital Design

G405

Post-graduate 1-year certificate – Game Design

For more information on the Business and Creative Arts Division, please visit: <http://www.georgebrown.ca/Divisions/bus.aspx#top>.

*Based on 2004-05 Enrollment

Centre	Number of programs (2005-06)	Location/Campus	For more information on programs offered in each Centre, visit:
Business	7	St. James	http://www.georgebrown.ca/business/index.aspx
Financial Services	8	St. James	http://www.georgebrown.ca/financialservices/index.aspx
Design	6	St. James	http://www.georgebrown.ca/design/index.aspx
Fashion	5	Casa Loma	http://www.georgebrown.ca/fashionstudies/index.aspx
Jewellery	4	Casa Loma	http://www.georgebrown.ca/jewellery/index.aspx
Dance	3	Casa Loma	http://www.georgebrown.ca/dance/index.aspx
Theatre	2	Young Centre for the Performing Arts	http://www.georgebrown.ca/theatre/index.aspx
General Arts & Science	3	Casa Loma	http://www.georgebrown.ca/Marketing/FTC/gas/index.aspx
Total	40		

THE CALL CENTRE

"Good morning George Brown College, George speaking, how can I help you?" The first voice to greet the public, students, staff, and faculty is from the Call Centre.

The role of the Call Centre is to respond to telephone and mail-in inquiries about post-secondary, Con Ed, ESL and Apprentice programs, admission criteria, registration procedure, services, facilities, and events to satisfy information requests from prospective and current students.

The Call Centre is a part of the Student Affairs Division – Student Service and Campus Life and includes the following staff members:

- Wayne Poirier, Director
 - Elizabeth Dantas, Operations Manager
 - Alma Ramadani, Student Service Analyst
 - Debbie Cornwall, Coordinator
- And the following Call Centre Agents:
- Anna Samples
 - Claire Defoy
 - Gifford Milado
 - Gagan Dhillion
 - Ernie Lapointe
 - Danielle Scott
 - Ophelia Davis
 - Julius Cajanding

The main responsibilities of the department are:

- Answer incoming calls regarding admission requirements, test booking, program inquiries, website trouble shooting, registration information, financial assistance information, calendar requests and switchboard type calls.
- Mailing course calendars, Ontario College Application Services guides and International packages.
- Responding to e-mails received through the general inquiry address
- Following up on the Customer Comment Line.

Call Centre Review Project

There is a Call Centre Review currently underway with the support of Yves Hebert, Chief Information Officer, Information Systems, and Michael Cooke, Vice President, Academic Excellence & Student Success, Co-Chairs and a Process Advisory Team. The focus of the review is to identify the current needs of our Call Centre and to find effective solutions in designing for the future of the college.

The current state of the Call Centre has been reviewed and benchmarked with other local colleges. The Call Centre Review has brought to light the following key challenges:

- To reduce the waiting time for callers
- Strategies for efficient information sharing with other departments on college events and changes to staff directories
- Looking at new technology and automation to better serve students
- Appropriate staffing for call volume
- Setting college-wide protocols for returning voicemail, e-mail, fax etc..

Fast Facts

- The Call Centre answers an average of 18,286 calls per month! In August, the number of calls received jumped to 30,000!
- The Call Centre responds to an average of 779 e-mails per month!
- The Call Centre mails out an average of 2,307 packages (calendars) per month!

Role Call is a regular column of CCN. It explains the roles and responsibilities of each academic division and department of George Brown College. Go to <http://insite> for more information.

Networking in style at Seigfried's

Just two months into the school year and it was once again time for George Brown's annual Centre for Hospitality and Tourism Industry Networking Event at Seigfried's. Over 200 faculty, students and industry partners attended the event, giving graduating students the opportunity to meet and network with industry leaders representing the hotel, attraction, restaurant and tourism communities. First year students in Culinary Arts and the Hospitality Tourism and Leisure Programs provided all the food and beverage service to allow the graduating students from the same programs the opportunity to mix and mingle and make connections with contacts in their chosen field.



Students gather and listen eagerly to advice and expertise.

Great \$2 lunch was enjoyed by hundreds at GBC's Taste of the World

The lineups were lengthy and the food was tasty as part of the St. James Campus lobby was taken over by our International students and staff who showcased their culture and culinary delicacies from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean. Colorful native costumes, décor and music made this event a perfect tie-in for the celebration of International Education Week which took place Nov. 14-18.



The European team served Ukrainian perogies, French pastries and English fancy sandwiches.



Their Winning Ways

The Amazing Race Team from the Advancement Office gets cozy to celebrate winning the United Way fund-raising game in late November. Their prize: a night at the Delta Chelsea Inn for each team member. From left are: Rosa Duran, Kiddy Mengesh, Cathy Callaghan and Wendy Bray. The foursome beat 16 other teams to win the race by answering questions about the College and United Way accurately and quickly. By Nov. 29 the College's United Way campaign had raised more than \$85,000 towards its goal of \$105,000.

Jammin' to Jamaica

The Centre for Early Childhood Development hosted the fourth annual Jammin' to Jamaica fundraising dinner earlier this month at Siegfried's in support of the Jamaica Project. Fifteen ECE students will travel to Kingston, Jamaica in 2006 to complete their placements in co-operation with Shortwood Teachers' College. All those in attendance were not only Jammin' - they were Jumpin' to the cool sounds and rhythms of the steel drums while feasting on traditional Jamaican fare. Special guest included the Honourable Gerard Kennedy, Minister of Education, and the silent auction was hosted by Citytv personality, Dwight Drummond.



Citytv personality Dwight Drummond and Anne Sado listen to ECE students reminisce about their work experience in Jamaica.

John Brooks Community Foundation Scholarship Fund

First year student Stephanie Reid, currently enrolled in the Social Service Worker program, was honoured by the John Brooks Community Foundation Scholarship Fund last month. The John Brooks Community Foundation and Scholarship Fund recognizes and celebrates academic achievement and community involvement with a goal of assisting in the development and support of young people, particularly of African descent. This scholarship will allow her to continue to pursue her education as well as her ongoing commitment to making a difference in the community.



(From left) Bill Gaper, Professor, Community Services, honoree Stephanie Reid, Stephanie Pickett, President, George Brown College Student Association, Jane Reid, Alexis Tregio, Student Association Alumni Representative, and Randy McLean, Member of GBC's Board of Governors. Photograph courtesy of Olive Sewell-Shutter Life.

Entry-Point Event

Earlier this month, Citytv's David Onley was at George Brown College to host the official project launch of Entry Point, a provincially funded program that assists post-secondary students with disabilities to find part-time employment. The Honourable Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Community and Social Services and Minister Responsible for Ontario's with Disabilities also attended the event which took place at Seigfried's.



(From left) Eugene Harigan, VP of Corporate Services, David Onley, Education and Science Specialist, Citytv, and Fared Champs, student.

UPCOMING EVENTS

You are cordially invited to... Eating Our Words

On Tuesday, December 6, the George Brown Chef School, Hospitality and Tourism Division, will play host to a truly delicious culinary literary panel.

Canada's culinary luminaries will gather for an evening to discuss the tricks of the trade. Panelists for the evening include James Chatto, Naomi Duguid & Jeffrey Alford, Gina Mallet, Elizabeth Baird, John Allemang, Bonnie Stern, and Marion Kane. The evening's moderator is the intelligent and affable Ian Brown of Globe & Mail and TVO fame.

To avoid disappointment register online at www.georgebrown.ca/eatingourwords.

The President's Office invites you to attend the George Brown College Town Hall

At the August 29 President's Breakfast, President Anne Sado stated that: "we must build stronger connections with all employees" and "we are committed to improving communications with staff through Town Hall-type forums so that we have an opportunity to connect face-to-face." At the Town Hall Meeting, Anne will provide an update on college level issues and activities, business planning for the coming year, and our work on setting a long-term vision and brand for GBC. This will be an opportunity to provide feedback and engage in a dialogue on our "path to leadership." You'll also have an opportunity to ask questions on items of interest to you. Please join us at these locations:

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

St. James Campus

200 King St E., Room 560E

Friday, December 9, 2005

12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

Casa Loma Campus

146 Kendal Ave., Room C246

A light lunch will be provided at the beginning of the meeting.

To register, please e-mail Staff Development at staffdev@gbrown.on.ca or call ext. 4932.

World Mental Health Day

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suggests that both ideas about immigrants and mental health are myths. Resettlement stress was the crucial factor that affected the mental health of these immigrants.

The three challenges the 'Boat People' faced when they arrived were unemployment, language fluency, and discrimination.

Unemployment placed immigrants at risk for depression. It took approximately ten years for immigrants to find jobs that "recognized their potential." People who lost jobs tended to become depressed. And depressed people were more prone to lose jobs. Those who learned English were more likely to find employment than those who did not know the language. About 25% of the 'Boat People' experienced discrimination at school and work. These experiences of discrimination also caused immigrants to become depressed.

Even though Canada has a policy to admit more immigrants each year, very little is being done to ensure that immigrants stay healthy. Dr. Beiser concluded.

Chioma shared how it was not the physical act of sexual abuse that damaged her. "It's the secrets that you keep."

Through counselling and psychotherapy, she finally began to address the repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse.

Today she uses her experiences to bring a message of hope to individuals who face challenges.

How can we help our immigrants to stay healthy? According to Dr. Zine, "We must acknowledge that there are multiple ways of knowing the world and honor that."



Grace Cherian is a freelance journalist and George Brown graduate.

Q&A with the President

President's trip to the Orient

Q Earlier this month you represented George Brown College and accompanied Premier Dalton McGuinty on an Ontario Trade Commission to China. What was the main focus of the trip?

This delegation of over 125 Ontarians was of huge significance because it was the first time in 20 years that an Ontario delegation visited China. participated in events in Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing to promote increased trade and investment, and cultural and education links between the province and one of the world's fastest growing economies.

Q What events did you participate in that were of significance to George Brown College?

Ontario and China both recognize the importance of investing in our human capital by strengthening the education of our people. In Beijing, the Premier signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China's Education Minister, Zhou Ji that will facilitate academic mobility and cooperation, and the mutual recognition of diplomas and degrees. As well, participated in several education sector sessions and hosted two receptions for parents of GBC International students. In Suzhou, George Brown College signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Kinderland Pre-School to establish an Early Education Childhood Development lab school in Suzhou.

Q What was the most rewarding part of this 12 day visit to China?

Without question, it was the opportunity to raise the profile of George Brown College in China and promote both Ontario and our college as a high quality education destination for Chinese students. It was also an opportunity to support the Ontario Government on this mission, as they have shown their strong support to post-secondary education.

Please send your questions for Q&A with the President to Diana Benjamin at dbenjam@gbrown.on.ca. Our next Q&A column will focus on questions asked at the George Brown College Town Hall meetings.

George Brown
The Toronto City College

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